

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CANBER 04987 260750Z
ACTION EB-08

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P R 260656Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3634
INFO USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EAGR, ETRD, MTN, JA, AS
SUBJECT: ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF JAPAN-AUSTRALIA MINISTERIALS

1. RAWDON DALRYMPLE, FIRST ASSISTANT SECRETARY, ECONOMIC DIVISION, DFA TOLD EMBOFF THAT AGRICULTURE WILL CERTAINLY FIGURE IN JAPAN-AUSTRALIA BILATERAL IN CANBERRA ON JUNE 26 AND 27 AND THAT THE GOA WILL FOCUS STRONGLY ON THE QUESTION OF HAVING AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS INCLUDED IN THE MTN. DALRYMPLE ALSO SAID THAT THE JAPANESE ATTITUDE TOWARD THE AUSTRALIAN VIEWS ON THE COMMON FUND AS REVIEWED BY PRIME MINISTER FRASER IN TOKYO IN APRIL WILL ALSO BE INCLUDED IN DISCUSSIONS. EMBOFF HAS ALSO LEARNED THAT THE JAPANESE WILL BE ASKED TO FOCUS ON THE FINANCIAL AND OTHER DEVELOPMENT ASPECTS OF THE NORTHWEST SHELF NATURAL GAS DEVELOPMENT PROJECT IN NORTHWEST WESTERN AUSTRALIA WHICH HAS, ACCORDING TO THE AUSTRALIANS, BEEN HUNG UP BY WHAT THEY PERCEIVE TO BE U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL QUESTIONS.

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2. THE QUESTION OF THE REFLATION OF THE JAPANESE ECONOMY AND ITS IMPACT ON LONG TERM CONTRACTS FOR AUSTRALIAN COAL AND IRON ORE IS TO BE REVIEWED AS A FOLLOW ON TO THE MEETINGS EARLIER THIS YEAR BY DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER FOR TRADE AND RESOURCES ANTHONY WHOSE LACK OF SPECIFIC RESULTS HAS BEEN GIVING HIM A HARD TIME POLITICALLY SINCE HIS RETURN.

3. THE JAPANESE HAVE BEEN RELATIVELY CLOSE MOUTHED SINCE THEIR ARRIVAL IN CANBERRA. SPEAKING AT A PRESS CONFERENCE IN CANBERRA ON THE EVE OF THE FIFTH MEETING OF THE AUSTRALIA/JAPAN MINISTERIALS, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS SONODA SAID THAT JAPAN WOULD SUPPORT AUSTRALIA'S ATTEMPTS TO HAVE AGRICULTURAL GOODS INCLUDED IN THE MTN BUT ADDED THAT "YOU ARE UNDOUBTEDLY AWARE OF MANY DIFFICULTIES IN THE FIELD OF AGRICULTURE THAT WE HAVE IN JAPAN". THE JAPANESE WERE OTHERWISE CAUTIOUS ON THE QUESTIONS THAT WILL BE RAISED DURING THE DISCUSSIONS AND WERE PARTICULARLY CAREFUL NOT TO COMMENT ON AUSTRALIA'S PARTICIPATION IN THE 40 PERCENT TARIFF REDUCTION FORMULA.

4. COMMENT: ECONCOUNSELOR MURAI OF JAPANESE EMBASSY HAS PROMISED TO GIVE EMBASSY A RUNDOWN ON THE DISCUSSIONS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AFTER THEIR TERMINATION AND IN ANY CASE NO LATER THAN THURSDAY, JUNE 29TH INCLUDING APPROPRIATE COMMENTS ON ANY DISCUSSIONS ON SUPPOSED TALKS ABOUT HIGH QUALITY BEEF OFFERS THE GOJ HAS IN MIND FOR THE U.S. SQUIRE

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